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Entered at the Post Office at New York as Second Class Matter.

Subscriptions by Mail, Postpaid.

	One Year	Six Months	Three Months
DAILY & SUNDAY	\$10.00	\$6.00	\$3.00
DAILY only	8.00	5.00	2.50
SUNDAY only	2.00	1.00	.50

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	One Year	Six Months	Three Months
DAILY & SUNDAY	\$14.00	\$9.00	\$4.50
DAILY only	12.00	7.50	4.00
SUNDAY only	2.00	1.50	.50

THE EVENING SUN, Per Month, \$1.00
THE EVENING SUN, Per Year, \$10.00
THE EVENING SUN (Foreign), Per Mo., \$1.50

All checks, money orders, etc., to be made payable to THE SUN.

Published daily, including Sunday, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association, 150 Nassau st., Borough of Manhattan, N. Y.

Washington office, Munsey Building, 400 Pennsylvania ave., Wash., D. C.
New York office, 150 Nassau st., N. Y.
M. T. Sullivan, Treas., Wm. T. Devall, all of 150 Nassau street.

London office, 40-42 Fleet street, E. C. 4, London, W. C. 2, England.
Paris office, 6 rue de la Michodiere, off rue du Quatre Septembre, Paris, France.
Washington office, Munsey Building, 400 Pennsylvania ave., Wash., D. C.
New York office, 150 Nassau st., N. Y.
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Telephone, BECKMAN 2200

"Just This"—and Nothing More.

"At last!" must have been in the mind of not on the lips of every expectant hearer when President Wilson, at the Sorbonne on Saturday, pronounced the following words as the opening phrase of a new paragraph in his eloquent address accepting the degree worthily conferred upon him by the University of Paris:

"My conception of a League of Nations is just this—"

There is nothing more ardently desired at this time by the Government and the people of the United States, and by the Governments and peoples of other nations associated with us in the business of concluding peace, than an exact definition of President Wilson's conception of a League of Nations. He has told us over and over again what he hopes that league will do for the future peace of the world. He has made it the chief factor in the business of concluding peace. He has established it as the pivot, the keystone, of his Fourteen Points. But he has never told the Congress, or told the Senate, his partner in the making of treaties, or told the Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations, or told the American people in whose name he is continually speaking to Europe, or so far as is known, told any living creature here or abroad just what that conception is. For all practical purposes of diplomacy and policy his League of Nations has remained until now an iridescent dream rather than a concrete product of statesmanship.

Therefore it may have seemed that the time for definite exposition had come at last when President Wilson began a new paragraph by saying:

"My conception of a League of Nations is just this—"

The long dash printed above is part of the official report of the President's speech. It separated the promise from the fulfillment. It introduced or purported to introduce the delayed and much desired explanation of just what his conception of a League of Nations is. And after the long dash came this dash of cold water on the expectations legitimately aroused by the preamble of promise:

"Just this—that it shall operate as the organized moral force of men throughout the world, and that whenever or wherever wrong and aggression are perpetrated or contemplated, this earthen light of conscience will be turned upon them and men everywhere will ask: 'What are the purposes that you hold in your heart against the fortunes of the world?'"

Thus the promise of exact definition of that which President Wilson is proposing in the name of the Government and people of the United States was dissipated again at the Sorbonne, as always before, into the nebulous vapor of vague and somewhat sentimental generalities. Instead of telling the peoples just what his conception of a League of Nations is, he gave them nothing more than an apocalyptic vision of what he hoped his unrevealed conception was to do for the world.

Do we go too far when we say, with due respect for the Presidential office, that this is—unsatisfying?

Better Broadway.

The decision of the Broadway Association to cure the ills of our biggest street is welcome to every one who has known its former attractiveness and watched with dismay the deterioration of some of its most important sections. It helps little to say that Broadway has gone to pieces only in spots. A chain with a few rotten links is not much of a chain until those links are replaced. The fact that Broadway below Union Square is alive and humming, that the Greeley and Herald squares sections boom with business and that the Boulevard blocks are a pleasant avenue does not hide the fact that there are parts of Broadway which no New Yorker points out with pride to the visitor.

Broadway has suffered even from presumed benefits. The very subways that ought to bring back some of the lost vitality to stretches like those of the Twenties have been the cause of making the street dirty sometimes almost impassable, for its small wonder that the shop-

ping public took naturally to Fifth and Madison avenues, particularly after the Fifth avenue business men had won their battle against the invasion of the factories and after the zoning system had put the growth of Manhattan on a business basis. It is the lesson of Fifth avenue that the men of Broadway must heed. If they want a clean new Broadway they will have to fight for it.

It will help, of course, to obtain an adequate lighting system and the paving of the blocks that have been torn and return by successive contractors. It may be that better surface car service is possible. What is even more important to the plan of regeneration is the enlistment of the sympathies of the property owners all along Broadway. Too many of them are like the Fifth avenue owners who, until the Save New York movement was begun, saw no further ahead than the rent check, not realizing that they were encouraging business of a character which was not suited to the district and which would in time cause fatal deterioration of values.

Broadway was once the show window of America, or at least an important part of the retail map that included Twenty-third street and Sixth avenue. It lost its handsome face in that region through the evils that threatened Fifth avenue. The avenue, now secure against being spoiled, put on the glories of the shopping district. But there is glory enough to go around; that is proved by the Madison avenue movement. Broadway below Forty-second street can be itself again. Its future depends to some extent upon the aid of State and city officials, but most of all upon the spirit of the men to whose interests the renaissance of the great street is of vital importance.

America's Good Finish in the Air.

The report made by Major-General Hays on the work of the American Air Service shows that our aid to the Allies increased with a rush in the last four months of the war. Yankee fliers were early in the game, but it was not until last spring, about the time the great German offensive began, that an American flier in the American service scored a kill, although a dozen heroic young Americans had distinguished themselves long before that in the Lafayette Escadrille and other units of the French aviation service.

Between that first kill in March and the first of July, according to the figures presented by LAURENCE L. DUBOIS in his "Heroes of Aviation," the total number of American victories was 167, and this total included the triumphs of LUBERY, THAW, PUTNAM, BAXTER and others who had flown under the tricolor. Now we learn from the Harvard report that the official American score up to Armistice Day was 845 enemy planes and 82 balloons "brought down"; and it must be assumed that these were all victories achieved in the American service, and since February. Major-General Hays announces that the destruction or capture of 491 of the 845 planes has been confirmed.

It is difficult to compare fairly the American record with the aviation scores of other nations. Mr. Dubois tells us that the total victories of the French were 847; of the British, 1,629. Beside these the record of the American Expeditionary Force's air service looks formidable and probably it will remain respectable even after the Allies announce their complete figures for the whole period of the war, including the exploits of the fliers who were not aces.

Our air army was made up of 57,508 men, including the 33,000 in the service of supply. Of these more than 6,000 men had been graduated as pilots and 1,100 of these were pursuit pilots—the men who climb the skies and skip from cloud to cloud. For pursuit, observation and bombing the air service had about 7,000 planes. The Harvard report does not specify the origin of these, using the phrase "received from all sources." We shall hear later about the exploits of our pilot machines; for the present it is a satisfaction to know that our fliers made a glorious Garrison finish.

Serbia and Jugo-Slavia.

The composition of the Jugo-Slav Cabinet is undoubtedly an indication that the founders and organizers of the new nation aim at a South Slav confederation and not at an extension of the realm of Serbia over the Slavic territory of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Cabinet, in the first place, is made up of representatives of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes; and in the second place, M. PASHITCH, who favored the formation of an enlarged Serbian kingdom, retires from the Premiership, and M. PASHITCH and Dr. TAVCHITSKY, who opposed Premier PASHITCH's plan, become members of the Cabinet.

This arrangement is apparently satisfactory to Serbia, which has accepted it most likely in the belief that the plans of the Jugo-Slav State will more readily meet the approval of the Paris conference. A confederation of Slav States without giving any one of them a great preponderance of power in the Balkans is practical. Besides this, the extension of the rule of the Serbs over the Croats and the Slovenes would have a tendency to keep alive the strife that is centuries old between the two branches of the Serb people. The Croats have, moreover, considered Agram, their capital, as strong a center of Serb influence as Belgrade, and have resented the domination of the Serbian kingdom.

The retirement of Premier PASHITCH would be a severe blow to the Southern Slav interests if it meant his

withdrawal from all participation in the upbuilding of the new nation. His long service as Serbian Premier has given him an acquaintance with Balkan and southern European politics that is especially needed at the present time. He called the Corfu conference, where the scheme of a South Slav union was formulated, and he has worked continuously for its advancement. He will remain, it is stated, as one of the advisers of Jugo-Slavia, and in that there is an assurance of the same conservatism that he has always shown in Serbian affairs.

One of the distinctive gains through the formation of the new Cabinet is the possibility of a thoroughly national representative body at the Paris conference. Some of the Ministers were participants in the Rome and London conferences, where the question of territorial rights between the Italians and Jugo-Slavs was definitely decided. The conflicting claims at that time were not considered reconcilable, and it is now believed, despite the apparent clash of interests, that they may be settled upon the terms of the original London compact.

Turkey in Bankruptcy.

Turkey had a public debt of 151,656,000 Turkish pounds worth \$440 each in normal times in April, 1914, according to the figures compiled for the Statesman's Year Book. Of this France held 62 per cent, and Germany 29 per cent. Since the beginning of the war Turkey has received advances amounting to £730,000,000 from Germany, repayable not more than eleven years after the close of the war. Now Berlin reports that Turkey contemplates "national bankruptcy" to free itself from its financial burden.

It is conceivable that the debt held by Turkey's own subjects might be repudiated, and Germany is in no position to enforce repayment of the money owing to her and her people. But France will not acquiesce in the repudiation of the debt owed to her and her people. The repayment of this is now in a position to enforce her demands. The honest payment of the debts owed to the Allies and their co-belligerents by the conquered Quadruple Alliance will be a subject for consideration at the Peace Conference.

Turkey's finances have always been fearfully and wonderfully managed, and in 1881 an arrangement with her creditors was made under the terms of which a Council of Administration at Constantinople received and distributed to the bondholders the funds derived from excise duties, from the Bulgarian, Eastern Rumelian and Cyprus tribute, and from the tax on Persian tobacco. The net revenue available in 1913-14 for the debt service was £75,382,472, compared with £74,536,005 in 1912-13. Until 1908 the empire had no budget. Annually since then a budget and finance law have been voted, but these have been supplemented by extraordinary budgets for special purposes, adjustments in the financial year, and other financial devices.

In 1915-16 Turkey had a deficit of £70,681,530; for 1916-17 the deficit was £730,077,550, and for 1917-18 £727,430,896. Obviously, there will be difficulties to overcome in obtaining payment from the dismembered empire, but the solution of such problems as its financial obligations beyond its own borders is a task for the Peace Conference.

Governor Smith at City Hall.

Governor-elect SMITH told the Aldermen in bidding goodby to them as their presiding officer that he would go to City Hall to transact official business whenever occasion requires during his term at Albany, and he added that he believed "it was upon the theory that the Governor of the State should sit in the City Hall that a room was set apart for him."

We think Governor SMITH is right, and that the Governor's Room in City Hall is not so named merely out of courtesy to the chief executive of the State, but because the State itself provided that beautiful apartment for the Governor's use when he visited this town. Our impression is that the State actually contributed to the cost of building the City Hall, and that there is in existence a statute or a contract or an agreement under the terms of which this portion of the City Hall is the property of the State of New York.

If this is the case, Governor SMITH on his visits to the Governor's Room will enter it, not as a welcome guest of New York City, though he will always be that, but as the representative and accredited agent of the proprietor, the People of the State of New York.

When Mr. SMITH drops from his title the suffix "elect" and enters the Executive Chamber in the Capitol at Albany he will have at his disposal a large and well equipped historical library, and we urge him to look this matter up and let us know if our impression about the Governor's Room in the City Hall is correct.

The human race has not yet attained the ideal state where a Christmas Eve can pass without some one realizing at the last moment that a gift has been forgotten.

If all the socks that Sister Susie knitted in the last four years were hung up to-night Santa Claus would have to send for help.

THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS.

Further Remarks on a Vague Phrase, With Illustrations From History.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: In not Mr. Charles E. Rushmore "straining at a gnat to swallow a camel" when he suggests that "Great Britain and her colonies" might "form a trade league" which, through "free trade" and "discriminating tariffs, imports and shipping regulations, render competition on our part practically impossible?"

There is little doubt that the United States fosters her trade with her extra-territorial possessions; that the products of the Philippine Islands and Hawaii, for instance, are imported into the United States on a different basis than like products from Australia, Malaysia, the Japanese archipelago or the Dutch East Indies. If this be the case, then the extra-territorial possessions of the United States, if they pay any tariff at all, pay a preferential tariff, which is just and their losses are not other countries pay such tariffs as are regulated by international treaty, such, perhaps, as may be guaranteed to them under a most favored nation clause.

Therefore, what objection could the United States, or for that matter any other nation, have to the suggestion that Great Britain should regulate her trade relations?

Now we learn that "the American delegates to the Peace Conference have resolved to advocate the sinking of the surrendered enemy warships and to resist any proposition to distribute them on the basis of the London Convention." This is to repeat Great Britain for having holding them in bay for three and a half years. Is it to compensate her for the loss of life she has suffered and the enormous expenditure that she incurred in the pursuit of brook trout and being limited to near by waters. I have frequently written for THE SUN's Red and Gun Department and for the outdoor magazines. Not wishing to invite numerous anglers I have invariably referred to it as the valley of abandoned farms.

Here are thousands of acres of once fertile land, acquired gradually during the last twenty years by a woman of wealth for what purpose no one knows. She has purchased all the land through which the stream runs, and where once were prosperous farms is now but a waste of brush grown pasture and upland hillsides interspersed with neglected apple orchards, crumbling foundations of collapsed barnhouses, even family burial grounds.

All this land could be restored to agricultural uses. I may say that in this instance there is no suspicion of profiteering in land values, nor have the water rights any value. It is a case of idle hoarding pure and simple.

NEW YORK, December 23.

AFTER PARIS, WHAT?

May We Not Hope for a League of the Stellar System?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Just as flying men "take the air," so Mr. Charles E. Rushmore and others of your co-correspondents are taking the ether these days (or nights) for ecstatic upward flights to infinity, and many of us, desperately enamored, try to attain celestial heights on their heels.

Let us enjoy these excursions while we may, for by and by, when the affairs of "our exceedingly tiny planet home" have been put in order at peace conferences and enough Texas statesmen are at liberty for the purpose, the rest of us will be left to make the most of our terrestrial existence. As Mr. Rushmore, Washington is not provided with wings, a comet with a long and radiant tail might be commandeered and fitted up with archives, typewriters, etc., everything except Republicans, and off into space take its way toward the stars.

By a tremendous switch of celestial wires, the world would naturally be taken over. Then every night Mr. Creel would emblazon the heavens with bulletins reaching from Aldebaran to the Southern Cross, telling us here below as much as we ought to know about what was going on up there, and we should be able to get the news no more cosmic dust than was necessary for our own good.

Therefore there would be no mysteries in space for Mr. Holmes to worry about; such things as the "rhythmic whirl of myriad universes" and "vibrations of the ether" would be reduced to statistics which all of us could understand. But it would be well to get a passport before embarking on any more night pilgrimages.

H. A. B.
NEW YORK, December 23.

Bureauism.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

Not infrequently we hear from croakers that we have in this country a "bureauism." But the real meaning which we are facing now is not "bureauism" but "bureauism."

By "bureauism" is meant the paternalism, socialism, Prussianism of Government ownership and operation of various lines of business now finding many advocates among us. Bureauism is a synonym for "bureaucracy." Mr. Bureauism is the member of the present Washington Government who has been most persistent in urging it.

Savings Stamp Sales in the Buzzard's Bay Lazzaretto.

From the Martha's Vineyard Herald.

A very rough sketch in the purchase of War Savings Stamps is made in the report from the Penikese Island post office, the latter office. There are twelve islands in our archipelago, and the post office. The exact figures show that up to the middle of November these twenty-two islands had purchased \$102,736 worth of stamps, which is at a rate of nearly \$2 per capita. This is over three times as much as the Government has asked for the per capita of the country and speaks volumes for the loyalty and acumen of the inhabitants of Penikese.

Miss Parker, the postmaster, is to be congratulated on the interest she takes in this government movement, and the end of the year the figures promise to be considerably increased.

An Arkansas Prescription.

Black Rock correspondence Walnut Ridge Blade.

Gas Angle has complained for several days of cold feet. Socks have been recommended.

The Christmas Mail.

On Christmas Eve no more we dream Of little clicking hoofs, And ting-a-ling-a-ling of tiny bells Across the snowy roads.

On Christmas morn no more we wake And listen with a thrill To merry music at the door, The postman's whistle shrill.

But when the chimneys begin to ring We seek a vintage high, And turn a bright and eager glance Toward the wintry sky.

A roar and racket in the air, And mighty wings that fall, The clouds assume their state, And lo! the Christmas mail.

MINNA JAYNE.

HARBOR'S NOISES.

Transport Mongolia Barely Escapes Running Into Governors Island.

SOUND DROWNS SIGNALS
Mayor Hylan's Committee Carries Zeal to Danger Point, Navy Men Say.

Thousands of passengers in Brooklyn yesterday received from employees of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company neat white cards, reading:

"Mayor Hylan as a committing magistrate has held certain employees and officials of the undersigned companies in proceedings to fix criminal responsibility upon them for the wreck which occurred November 1 in the Malbone street tunnel."

"Do you approve his action?"

A blank is provided for the reply and white space is provided for "Remarks as to which the card says: 'We have the freest expression of your views. Please fill out and hand to any doctor.' It is signed 'New York Consolidated Railroad Company' and 'Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company'."

Criticized by Mayor Hylan.

As soon as the distribution of the cards had been called to his attention Mayor Hylan issued the following statement:

"The attempt on the part of the New York Consolidated Railroad, a subsidiary of the B. R. T. to get an expression of opinion from the people of Brooklyn on the action of myself as a committing magistrate, is a gross and unwarranted interference with the certain employees and officials of the company for criminal negligence in the wreck which occurred November 1 in the Malbone street tunnel is the most brazen attempt to lay a foundation for an application for a change of venue in the history of New York."

Whistling Confused Navigator.

As the big transport approached the south end of Governors Island in the fog the Patrol, carrying Mayor Hylan's committee, came out of the muck and approached very near to the transport. Her siren was going at a rate utterly deafening to the officers of the Mongolia. They were listening by the second for every toll of the bell buoys that marked the correct channel, but the Patrol's whistle, joined with the whistling from other boats, made it impossible to hear the bells. Just then a tug and tow, outgoing, sheered toward the Mongolia, and the big transport veered from the channel. In the fog she got too far, and before her navigating officer knew where he was the transport was almost on top of Governors Island. Only the quickest action and the coolest decision saved trouble.

But this, according to Admiral Gleaves and Capt. Morgan, is nothing to what might easily occur if the Patrol and small boat fleet insist on crowding around transports. They fear that one of these days there will be a collision and possibly the sinking of a transport with great loss of life.

"Safety First" the Rule.

"It is all very well," said an officer of Admiral Gleaves' staff with the Admiral's approval, "for the returning soldiers to get the whistled welcome, but it is mighty bad for navigation. Now let everybody get this matter straight. We want the returning soldiers to feel as happy as they can possibly feel on their homecoming. Nothing is too good for them. But our main duty is to provide for their safety. We don't want a few hundred of them drowned in New York's front yard. We don't want cars on 500 doorways in America. Just because small boats must whistle troops into port. It ought to be stopped and if there is any way to accomplish it it will be stopped."

Danger of collision in fog is very real, according to Admiral Gleaves, when transports, carrying soldiers, are in the harbor and the Patrol and small boats and all the whistling hulloos have simply been a nuisance and a danger to the officers responsible for getting the soldiers to land safe and sound. Because of this conviction Capt. Godfrey G. Garden, Port Captain in charge of anchorage and enforcement of navigation laws, has taken up the matter with Washington with the entire backing of Vice-Admiral Gleaves.

HOW TO HANG THE FLAG.

Conflicting Opinions in a New Jersey Church.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The correspondence in your columns about the use of the flag at the New Jersey State House, and the New Jersey State House, has been most interesting, but has not yet touched on a point in dispute here.

A contents that the flag, hung on a horizontal line over the pulpit, should be on the right, that is, the side of the church where the service is held. The speaker, the service flag, in this instance, occupying the opposite end of the line.

What is correct?

MENDHAM, N. J., December 23.

TRADE BRIEFS.

The aggregate value of declared exports from Malaga, Spain, to the United States during the first nine months of 1918, totaled a total of \$507,075, against \$621,709 for the corresponding period of 1917.

The national debt of Sweden has increased from \$60,130,000 of Sweden to \$124,490,000 crowns at the end of 1917 (\$282,501,480 to \$322,451,320).

The present demand for condensed milk in Japan, says the Far East Commercial Supplement, amounts to some 3,000,000 cans a year, and is expected to increase before the war the larger amount of the supply by the United States and Switzerland.

The American Consul at Sarnia, Ontario, reports that according to statement from Ottawa, Canada, it is proposed to remove the prohibition against the importation of nuts and vegetables in the near future.

According to a report of the Revista del Comercio, Paraguay, the firm of Tanguet y Compania of Buenos Ayres is about to establish in Asuncion a factory for making twine and lags from one of the three plants large in the country.

According to the Canadian Grocer and half gallon paint cans will again be put on the market. The proposal of the manufacturers to discontinue the price and to reduce the cost of the paint, the approval of a great many retailers, several of the manufacturers also were against the idea.

The estimated total production of potatoes in the Dominion of Canada for 1918 is put at 105,570,000 bushels, as compared with 78,892,000 for last year. Root crops proved a record crop, with turnips leading at 130,767,000 bushels.

The bulk of the animal tallow exported from China is beef tallow, obtained from North China. The exports for 1917 were valued at about \$3,000,000.

An American consular officer in South America has transmitted the name of a person in his district who desired to sell quantities of corundum. He can supply about 100 tons a month. The name of the shipper can be obtained from the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce or the consular or cooperative offices by referring to File No. 104819.

Lade Fabrikker is the name of a new corporation capitalized at \$100,000 being formed in Trondheim, Norway, for the manufacture of oils and soaps.

So Many Are Only Boiled Plate.

From the New York Herald.

Lost or stolen seven cars; gentleman's diamond ring.

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